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ON-THE-RECORD BRIEFING

**U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan J. Scott Gration
On the Current Status of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and His Recent Travels**

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Washington, D.C.**

MR. KELLY: Good morning. We're very pleased to have with us today Scott Gration. General Gration grew up in the now Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya. He served in the Air Force from 1974 to 2006. Among his assignments, in 1995, he was in command of the 4404th Operations Group in Saudi Arabia. In 1996, he was in Turkey and oversaw Operation Northern Watch, which enforced, as you know, the no-fly zone over Iraq. Among his Pentagon assignments, in 2000 and 2001 he was Deputy Director for Operations in the Joint Staff in Washington and was also Director, Strategy Plans and Policy Directorate of the United States European Command in Stuttgart. General Gration speaks Swahili and has a Masters – well, he has a B.A. from Rutgers and a Masters from Georgetown in National Security Studies.

General Gration was appointed as the President's Special Envoy to Sudan on March 18, 2009, and we're very pleased to have him with us here today. He'll make some remarks and then take a few questions.

MR. GRATION: Thank you very much for that kind introduction, and good morning. I appreciate the opportunity to be here today to share some of the things that I've learned since becoming the Special Envoy to Sudan. I'll tell you what we've been doing in the last three months, and then I'll give you an idea of what we plan to do in the next few months.

Since my appointment on the 18th of March I've made three overseas trips. The first was to Sudan, where I traveled to Darfur, Juba, Abyei, and to Khartoum. The second was to Sudan's neighborhood, to Doha, to Cairo, N'Djamena. The last trip was to London and Paris and Beijing. I've learned through these trips that we need to have constructive dialogue with the international community, with all parties in Sudan. We need to have engagement with all parties to save lives in Sudan, to bring about a lasting peace. More suffering in Sudan is simply unacceptable. We need engagement to make a positive difference in Darfur. We need engagement to fully implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

This isn't about discussions only. It's about making a difference in the lives of the Sudanese people. It's about getting results.

Our initial efforts to build multiple channels of dialogue have produced some positive results. We've been able to work with the Government of Sudan and NGOs and the United Nations to restore humanitarian assistance capacity in Darfur. Three new NGOs are joining the international humanitarian assistance team in Darfur. Along with that, the UN and remaining NGOs have been able to increase their capacity. And we've essentially closed the humanitarian gap that existed in Darfur when the 13 NGOs were expelled.

The situation remains fragile, and the short-term interventions by USAID and its partners still need to be strengthened. The constructive dialogue will also help us negotiate a ceasefire in Darfur so that the people living in IDP camps and refugee camps have the opportunity to move back to a place of their own choosing and to be able to live in safety and security and dignity.

This dialogue engagement is also helping us in the second round of the talks in Doha, a process that's designed to produce a political settlement to Darfur, a process that is designed to improve relations between Chad and Sudan, and to stop the fighting and violence that has been so disruptive. The dialogue and engagement will also be critical as we implement all the aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Before the referendum for self-determination is held on January 2011, we have a lot of work to do. We have to secure agreements on border demarcations, wealth sharing, power sharing. In addition, we have to make sure that all parties are involved to ensure that places like Abyei do not become the next war zone in Sudan. To successfully tackle these challenges, we need the support of the international community. We must continue to deepen and broaden international coordination in Sudan.

One initiative in this direction is the Forum for Supporters of the CPA. This event that will be held on the 23rd is an event where we will bring together over 30 countries and organizations to help restore that international commitment and to rekindle the passion that we had in Naivasha in 2005 when the CPA was signed.

Before I take your questions, let me tell you about the tight timeline that we have to work within. We only have eight months to get ready for the national elections, and we only have 19 months before that referendum that will determine the future of Abyei and of Southern Sudan. With these events fast approaching, it's absolutely critical that we work together, that we seize every opportunity to save lives, to facilitate a lasting peace in Sudan, and to promote stability and security in the entire region.

I'm ready for your questions.

MR. KELLY: If you can identify yourself, too. Well, we all know who you are, Kirit, but go ahead and identify --

QUESTION: Kirit Radia of ABC News. If I could just ask -- President Bush and his top officials always referred to the situation in Darfur as a genocide. Not going back to define what

happened in the past, would you describe what is happening – the situation now in Darfur – as a genocide?

MR. GRATION: What we see is the remnants of genocide. What we see are the consequences of genocide, the results of genocide. We still have thousands of people living in camps as IDPs. We have women who are still afraid to go out and collect firewood. And we have children that are not having the benefits of growing up in their homeland -- that are growing up in these camps.

So what we need to do is focus on the people. We need to correct the situation. We need to bring a ceasefire. We need to bring a political process. We need to bring security and safety and dignity so these people have the right to return voluntarily to wherever they choose, and that they can live out their lives in, as I said, safety and security and dignity.

And that's what we're aiming and we're working on building a future for these folks.

QUESTION: But the level of violence, would you describe that as genocide at this point?

MR. GRATION: The level of violence that we're seeing right now is primarily between rebel groups, the Sudanese Government, and as you know from the news, we've had some violence between Chad and Sudan. The violence still exists where bandits and Janjaweed and warlords and those kinds of folks do conduct terrorist activities on these folks and do increase terror. But it doesn't appear that it is a coordinated effort that was similar to what we had in 2003 to 2006.

QUESTION: So, no.

MR. KELLY: Lach.

QUESTION: Okay. Yeah. I'm Lachlan Carmichael from AFP. During your recent travels, you visited China. Would you say that was the key stop in your travels and that's because you need commitments on military supplies from them or to stop the supply of military weapons to Sudan, and that they're key to resolving both the conflict that could reemerge in Abyei and also in Darfur? What kind of commitments did you get during that trip?

MR. GRATION: What we're trying to do is visit all the capitals of nations who have an interest in Sudan. And China certainly has an interest in Sudan. They have a large investment – about \$4 billion in the oil – and that oil is in Abyei, which is on the border between the North and the South.

And what we've been able to secure with the Chinese is an understanding that we have similar goals in Sudan. We both need security. We both need stability. We come at it from different sides, but the end results are the same. And so we have reached agreement to share information, to work together, to integrate our activities on the humanitarian front. And I'm very happy that Ambassador Liu and I have been able to develop a strong relationship. He was with us in Doha. He will be with us on the 23rd.

QUESTION: So they gave you no commitments on weapons or linking supply of weapons to actions that the government might be taking -- the Sudanese Government?

MR. GRATION: We didn't spend a great deal of time discussing those issues.

MR. KELLY: Charlie.

QUESTION: Charlie Wolfson with CBS. Can you describe the discussions you've had with the Government in Khartoum, and how responsive they were, if at all, and whether -- and to the extent they're worried about the genocide and other legal actions taken against them?

MR. GRATION: Our main efforts in negotiations and discussions and dialogue with the Khartoum Government were initially over the return of the NGOs. Our position was that we would like to have all the expelled NGOs returned. And we've been happy to see that through a period of discussion, we now have three new NGOs returning to Sudan, and they have taken steps to improve the operating environment for international NGOs in terms of visas, in terms of technical agreements, and in terms of making the operations more effective. So we are pleased to see that the words that they have given us have turned into deeds, and that's what we're holding them accountable to do.

QUESTION: And what about the other expelled NGOs? You said three new ones?

MR. GRATION: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: So none of the expelled NGOs have returned. What's the status of that?

MR. GRATION: It appears that the 13 NGOs that were expelled will not be allowed back into the country. But you should note that right now, we are near a hundred percent capacity returned. We have -- on the food side, we're providing the same food resources as we were prior to expulsion, a hundred percent. And in the WASH, which is water, sanitation and hygiene, we're at about 95 percent, and the other services about a hundred.

Now I must say that some of this is being done through emergency methods. In other words, it's not sustainable. But with the new NGOs that are going back in right now, we believe we'll be able to sustain these operations and actually get more capacity than we had on the third and the fourth when these were expelled.

MR. KELLY: Yes. Can you identify yourself?

QUESTION: Bill Varner with Bloomberg News. It's been reported that the level of violence in Southern Sudan, North-South violence, is now greater than that in Darfur. Is that your view, your observation from what you've seen?

And also, what is the linkage, if any, between the expectation that Sudan will increase its oil output to 600,000 barrels a day by the end of the year and a million by 2015, the rising oil prices, and perhaps the increased level of violence in Southern Sudan where most of the oil is?

MR. GRATION: Yes. The reason that we're spending so much time on border demarcation, on wealth sharing, just grazing rights, and where the – and how we're going to have that border, it's really not up to us, but we're trying to create an environment where the North and the South can resolve these issues, because you're exactly right. As the production increases, as the value of the oil and the other commodities that are possibly under the ground yet to be discovered, as these issues and the value of these products goes up, obviously, the tensions can increase. So what we're doing is we're going to be holding trilateral talks to allow these governments to work through these issues, and we'd like to get resolution in the very near future.

As you know, the Abyei arbitration is coming out in July. And so the timeline for these discussions is very, very short. And so United States and the rest of the international community is doing what we can to help create an environment where these issues can be looked at and resolved in a way that's mutually beneficial to both the North and the South.

QUESTION: And just to follow up, I mean, is it your observation that the level of violence and the North-South violence is now outstripping Darfur? And is your observation that whatever you observe about the level of violence, it is related to resources?

MR. GRATION: I will say that the level of violence is greater, and we've seen an uptick in violence in the South. It's very difficult at this time to exactly attribute it to the resources, but it is very concerning to us.

MR. KELLY: Yes, Mary Beth.

QUESTION: Could you give us kind of a sense of context about the meeting – I'm sorry, Mary Beth Sheridan from *The Washington Post* – a sense of context about the meeting next week? I mean, when was the last time there was this type gathering? You know, what are you hoping comes out of that?

MR. GRATION: Yes. As far as I know, there have been hard task meetings. There have been meetings to coordinate donor contributions and those kinds of things. But as far as I know, this is probably the first meeting at this level and of this type. At least I'm not aware of any others in the past. But it's probably appropriate that it is happening now, because we are now approaching the point where we need to get into the sprint mode, where we need to get everybody together coordinated on the same sheet of music. So it's probably appropriate that it is happening now, and there probably was not a requirement for this kind of meeting earlier.

So that's what we're trying to do right now, is to get the folks together, the team together, and do that final surge so that we can get the national elections done. Within the CPA, there's requirements for the international community to participate as monitors and to take an active role. And of course, that process is – it's going to be the same process that we'll be using for the

referendum, the referendum that will allow the people of Abyei and the people of Southern Sudan to decide whether they want to be a unified country or an independent country.

MR. KELLY: Daniel Dombey from *Financial Times*.

QUESTION: A very general question, and I apologize if you've had to deal with this before. Can you mark out anything that distinguishes this Administration's approach to Darfur specifically from the previous Administration? I mean, we sporadically heard talk of a no-fly zone being contemplated in the previous administration, seems to be a more emollient line in this Administration, or is that wrong?

MR. GRATION: Our focus right now is to save lives. We have a situation where the lives of many people are at risk, whether they're in Darfur or whether they're in the three areas of Southern Kordofan, Abyei, and the Blue Nile. We want to make sure that this situation is stabilized, and so we're taking efforts to make sure that the humanitarian assistance is there, that we're able to facilitate and help coordinate a ceasefire, an end of hostilities, and then we want to make sure that there's political processes in place in Darfur and these other places, so the will of the people can be brought and so that they can have democratic principles and mechanisms.

That's what we're working on right now, and we're using all methods to accomplish this, whether they be carrots and whether they be sticks.

QUESTION: Just to --

MR. KELLY: One – okay, go ahead, Dan.

QUESTION: Yeah, sorry. Just to follow up on that, does that mean that essentially, it's a continuity with the last administration, or would you say it's – you're actually standing out by taking an eminently practical approach?

MR. GRATION: What we're doing is making sure that we are value-added to the situation. And so there's things that the last administration were doing that we're continuing, and there's also things that are new and – in terms of our approach. What we want to do is get results. What we cannot tolerate is the continuing lack of human rights that we're seeing, the lack of conditions that we want those people to live in. And so what we're doing is taking a look at all the elements of national power that we can bring to bear to get results to change that situation, so that the people in Sudan have a brighter future, have more stability, more security, dignity, and human rights.

MR. KELLY: Last question. We'll go back to Kirit.

QUESTION: A two-part question that are related, actually. Your predecessor seemed to focus more as Sudan envoy on the Darfur problem. You've spoken more about the CPA and the problems with North-South. Do you think – would you describe that as your main focus right now? Do you see that as more of the powder keg?

And similarly, there's been a lot of criticism from some on the Hill, mainly from Congressional Black Caucus, that not enough is being done for Darfur. Do you think that is a misplaced concern?

MR. GRATION: What I would say is that we've realized in the trips that I've made that this is a situation where we can look at things in series. We're going to have to parallel process. We're going to have to work Darfur as hard as we can. And that's why we're working hard to resolve the tensions between Chad and Sudan, because it impacts on Darfur. That's why we're totally engaged in Doha and why I've made several trips there, and why I've put my full support behind the AU and the UN mediation and the efforts that the Qatar Government are doing.

This is why we're working hard with the Government of Sudan and the rebel groups to do the prisoner exchanges and those things that are preventing us from getting the peace and stability that we seek. At the same time, we have to work very hard on Southern Sudan. As the CPA is winding down, there are things that must be done, but there's also development work and other aspects that we must focus on – the things we've talked about in the three areas. In addition to that, the neighborhood. There's things that we need to work on.

My point is that our approach is very comprehensive. Our approach is integrated. Our approach is one where we do multiple things at the same time, just because our timeline is so short and the challenges are so great that we no longer can have the luxury to segment and focus on one thing and then switch to the other. We must work all these at the same time in an integrated way where all parties are part of the solution, where the international community comes together in a unified way to bring about the results that we all seek.

MR. KELLY: Okay, thank you very much.

MR. GRATION: Thank you.

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